



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Communications Office of Lieutenant Governor Steve Pence**

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For Immediate Release**

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Editors: Any advance and event coverage you could provide to inform your readers/viewers/listeners about this public input meeting would be appreciated, including mentions in your calendar and briefs sections.

Hazard will be Site of Regional Public Forum on Drug Issues Next Week

FRANKFORT, Ky. – Citizens in Perry and surrounding counties will have the opportunity to provide information and voice their concerns about substance abuse in their communities at a public input meeting slated for Tuesday, March 16, in Hazard.

The forum is the sixth of 16 input meetings that will be held around the state in association with Gov. Ernie Fletcher's Drug Control Policy Assessment Summit.

Residents in Perry, Knott, Harlan, Leslie, Bell, Knox, Clay, Owsley, Lee, Wolfe and Breathitt counties are invited to attend the public input forum, which will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Hal Rogers Law Enforcement Technology Center. Citizens who require special accommodations at the meeting may call (859) 622-1328.

Lt. Gov. Stephen B. Pence, who is heading the assessment initiative, will be among those attending the meeting in Hazard.

At the meeting, experts in drug prevention-education, treatment and enforcement will hear from citizens, officials, and representatives of prevention-education, treatment and enforcement programs from the 11-county area.

Public input is a component of Gov. Fletcher's Drug Control Policy Summit Initiative, which calls for state, local and federal officials who specialize in drug prevention-education, treatment and enforcement to conduct a 20-week, comprehensive evaluation of substance abuse in Kentucky.

Assessment team members are assigned to panels – Treatment, Prevention-Education or Enforcement – depending on their specialty. Each panel has assigned

delegates, or panel subcommittee members, to conduct the regional public input meetings across the Commonwealth.

At the input forums, attendees who want to address a subcommittee panel sign in to speak to the panel of their choice. Speakers may appear before more than one panel.

Information provided at the meetings will be recorded. The panel subcommittees will review the comments and materials from the input meetings and report their findings to the assessment team.

Those who attend the forum will be encouraged to visit the Kentucky Drug Summit Web site, where they may complete a questionnaire about drug issues in their communities. Hard copies of the questionnaire will be available at the forum.

This assessment is the first in the state to bring together officials in every area of substance abuse – prevention-education, treatment and law enforcement – to examine Kentucky’s drug issues from each of those perspectives.

Along with illegal drugs, the Summit team is assessing inappropriate prescriptions as well as alcohol and tobacco use in the Commonwealth.

At the conclusion of the assessment, the group will offer recommendations to the governor on establishing Kentucky’s first statewide drug-control policy. It will be designed to produce greater, measurable results in reducing illegal drug trafficking and abuse, eliminate duplication and gaps in services and ensure that the state makes the best use of its monetary resources.

Panel subcommittee members will be available for media interviews between 12:30 and 1 p.m. at the public input forum.

For more information about the drug-control initiative, visit the Kentucky Drug Summit Web site at www.kydrugsummit.ky.gov.

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